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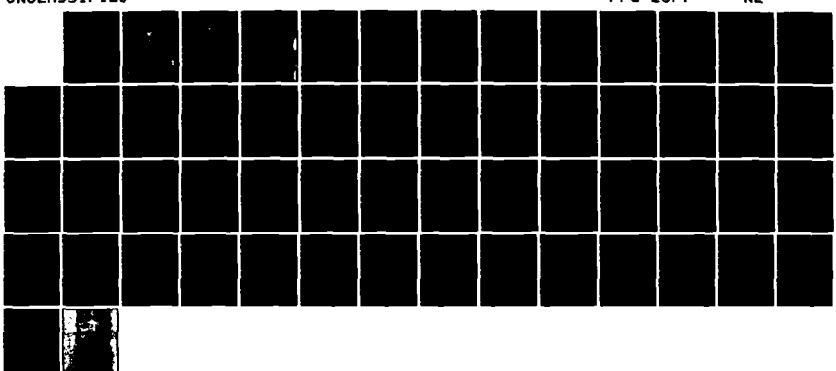

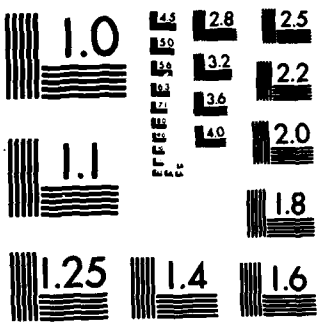

AIR COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE

STUDENT REPORT

THE BATTLE OF MARATHON:
DARIUS THE GREAT VS. MILTIADES

MAJOR WILLIAM F. SCHLESS, JR. 84-2320

"insights into tomorrow"

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Major William F. Schless, Jr. received his Bachelor of Arts Degree in History from St. Louis University in 1971. Subsequently, he received a Master of Arts Degree in Management from Webster College in 1979. Following commissioning through AFROTC in 1971, he graduated from Undergraduate Pilot Training in 1972. In 1973, he completed a tour in Southeast Asia flying over 550 combat hours in the EC-47. Since that time, he has flown over 3700 hours in the C-131B, T-39, and C-141B aircraft, and has completed assignments at the headquarters and wing levels within the Military Airlift Command (MAC). From 1977 to 1981, he served at Headquarters MAC in the Directorate of Aircrew Standardization and Evaluation as T-39 Standardization Program Manager, flight examiner, and CINCMAC T-39 Pilot. In 1981, he transferred to Charleston AFB where he flew as a C-141B Aircraft Commander and was Assistant Chief of the Combat Plans and Exercises Branch. In 1983, Major Schless entered Air Command and Staff College (ACSC) at Maxwell AFB. He has also completed the ACSC seminar program in 1980 and was a graduate from Squadron Officers School in 1975.

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Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

The battle of Marathon in 490 B.C. was a turning point in the history of the Western world.

> The battle decided that no longer the despotism of the East, with its repression of all individual action, but the freedom of the West, with all its incentives to personal effect, should mark the future centuries of history. The tradition of the fight forms the prelude of the story of human freedom. (19:195)

The Marathon story is important for its historical perspective and, for the military professional, its contribution to the study of military strategy. By examining the two opposing armies, this study will explore the strategies and tactics of the first major land battle between the Greeks and the Persians. The battle, which pitted Miltiades against Darius the Great, was a fight between two armies of different social upbringing and different methods of warfare. (18:34) In addition to examining the historical accounts of the battle, this study will analyze the battle of Marathon in the context of the Air Command and Staff College Strategy Process Model.

To begin this analysis, Chapter Two will cover the rise of Darius to power, his rule, problems he solved or dealt with, and his various accomplishments. Chapter Three deals with the makeup of the Persian army; taking a look at

the individual soldier, his armament, and his tactics. Chapters Two and Three provide a background setting and a stage for the Persian side of the battle.

The next chapters deal with the Greeks. Chapter Four concerns Miltiades and how he came to become the leader of the Athenian army. This chapter provides a short history of the Greek city states of the fifth century B.C. and how they came into conflict with the Persians. In the fifth chapter, the study provides an analysis of the Greek army, including the phalanx, the hoplite, and various tactical maneuvers.

Having provided a background for both opposing forces, Chapter Six deals with the Persian invasion of Greece at the plain of Marathon, setting up the description of the battle in Chapter Seven. The conclusion, Chapter Eight, adds a postscript concerning the two leaders of the day as well as drawing some conclusions.

This project has been written from both the historian's perspective and the context of the Air Command and Staff College Strategy Process Model. However, in studying this battle, one important thought should be kept in mind; that is, what if the other side had won on that day, in September 490 B.C.?

> We cannot conceive what European civilization would be like without those rich and vitalizing elements contributed to it by the Greeks, and especially by the Athenian, genius. But the germs of all these might have been smothered and destroyed had the barbarians won the day at Marathon. Ancient Greece, as a satrapy of the Persian Empire, would certainly become what modern Greece became as a province of the empire of the Ottoman Turks. (19:195)

Chapter Two

DARIUS THE GREAT

BIOGRAPHY

Darius the Great was the second successor to the great Persian ruler, Cyrus the Great. Cyrus consolidated the Persian empire in the mid-sixth century B.C. by defeating the Median dynasty, the Lydians in Asia Minor, and the Babylonians. Cyrus' son, Cambyses, succeeded Cyrus, and he expanded the Persian empire to include Egypt.

Darius, born in 550 B.C., was the son of Hystapes, a Governor of the Persian provinces Parthia and Hyrcania, and a kinsman of Cyrus. (12:74) Following his father's pattern of success, Darius was a "man of great prominence and popularity" as well as an army officer. (1:58) After the death of Cambyses, an imposter usurped the Persian throne. Darius conspired with five other nobles to uncover the imposter king. After the imposter was killed, Darius became king. (1:113)

When Darius came to power, in 522 B.C., he spent the first years of his reign quelling widespread rebellion within the Great Empire. After restoring order, Darius set about organizing his empire.

GOVERNMENT

Darius divided his empire into twenty satrapies or provinces. Each satrap had a governor, who was a true civil servant and not merely a tax collector. Satraps were men of high birth and sometimes members of the royal family. In addition to being the highest judical authority in the province, the satraps collected tribute, maintained law and order, secured communications, and mobilized militias in support of the king. (13:15) In order to check the satrap, a high official, known as the "King's Eye," inspected the satrapies and reported on the governor's conduct. (12:76)

Darius' place in history is not primarily as a military conqueror, but rather a great organizer and administrator. His empire became the model for the subsequent great Roman Empire. The Persian empire, also like the much later British empire, was enormous in size with multiples of people and nations, having different races, languages, and religions. Darius faced a three-fold problem. First, he had to win over the empire and maintain the loyalty of its subjects. Second, he needed to delegate power without losing his central authority and control. And third, he had to prevent invasion and internal revolt. (12:74)

In his approach to these fundamental problems, Darius first adopted a policy of tolerance towards the subject people. Although he was an absolute monarch, he assured the rights and privileges of each national or ethnic group. Unlike his

predecessor, he paid great regard to their customs and traditions.

In terms of local rule, Darius reigned as the King of Babylon in Babylonia. In Egypt, he was the pharaoh and as the successor of the pharaohs, he was considered son of Ammon Ra. In Cyprus and Phoenicia, Darius kept the local kings, and in the Greek cities of Ionia, he allowed the local tyrants to keep their titles.

The empire was connected by a network of roads linking each satrapy with the capital, Susa. The most noteworthy was the Royal Road which ran 1600 miles from Sardes to Susa. Posting stations and inns were established every four parasongs (approximately 14 miles), and the royal messengers could travel the entire route by relays in seven days. The common rate of travel was 90 days. (12:75)

There was a weak link in Darius' system, for an ambitious satrap could become very independent. To counter this, Darius maintained a standing army as a check on the militia should a satrap attempt to break away from the king's authority. This standing army consisted of the King's Bodyguard of 2000 infantry plus a division of 10,000 Immortals. Additionally, the army troops were garrisoned in the cities and other strategic points, as a further check. (12:75-76)

Darius also established a Royal Academy to educate the sons of nobles. In addition to providing for an adequate supply of loyal officers, it also was another means to check the

satraps and the nobles, "because these youths could be held as hostages for the good behavior of their fathers." (12:76)

PERSIAN ECONOMY

The main source of wealth in the Persian Empire was land, and the King controlled all the land. The key to life on the land was water. Irrigation was extremely important for the empire whether in the Fertile Crescent between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers or on the Iranian plateau. As the King owned all the land, the people were fiefs but not in the feudal sense. The empire had centralized power, but it was set up in a hierarchial sense similar to a feudal system. (11:137-9)

Darius also instituted a stabilized tax reform that broke with tradition. Prior to Darius, taxes on land were assessed before harvest, which created a hardship on farmers. Darius had all of the land surveyed and measured together with a record of past yields. Based on this survey, Darius determined a fixed yearly land tax on the basis of an average yield for the land. This system greatly helped the farmer in that it took into account the kind of cultivation as well as the average amount of yield. (11:138-9)

Darius didn't interfere with local religions, customs, language or trade as long as the people paid their taxes and kept the peace. He was known as the "Shopkeeper" because he stimulated trade by introducing a uniform system of gold and silver coinage. This also helped unify the empire. (24:24)

EARLY CAMPAIGNS

Under the reign of Cyrus, the eastern boundary of the empire was Gandhara. Darius' national objective during his reign was to extend the boundaries of the Persian Empire both east and west. He conquered the Indians of the Indus Valley and opened up trade by sea. The Satrapy of India eventually became one of the empire's wealthiest, paying the largest tax of all provinces. (11:147)

After Darius had his empire firmly under his control, he decided to test his powers in foreign wars against the Scythians, who were to the north of Asia Minor. His predecessor had tried and failed in this region. The tribes that Darius planned to attack occupied the countries north of the Danube. His invasion route would take him through Asia Minor, across the Bosphorus into Thrace, and then across the Danube--"a distant and dangerous expedition." (1:149-152)

The motive for Darius' invasion of Scythia wasn't much more than a demonstration of his power under the pretext that the Scythians had made incursions into the Persian empire in earlier years. Another objective was the creation of a buffer zone north of the colonized area of Asia Minor. (18:15-16) However, it appears that "the expedition was a wanton attack upon neighbors . . . simply for the purpose of adding to his already gigantic power." (1:169)

The Scythians were a wandering, nomadic people from west of the Russian steppes who used a mobile, cavalry-type warfare.

They used horsemen to keep good track of the enemy and also to harass the flanks and kill soldiers straying from the camp. This indirect approach kept the invaders on alert and on edge. (1:175)

Darius' invasion of Scythia in 511 B.C. was a major undertaking. He built a bridge across the Bosphorus to invade Thrace and Macedonia. Darius called upon the Phoenician and Grecian seamen to man ships to protect his left flank. (18:15-16)

Darius' army crossed the Bosphorous and advanced into the steppes between the Danube and Dniester rivers. The Scythians showed great skill in their defensive scheme. They declined to meet the Persian army in open battle, preferring to rely on piecemeal attacks. The Scythians worked the rear of the Persians, harassing the lines of retreat and threatening the bridges built over the Danube. They destroyed crops and filled up springs, but they never entirely destroyed an entire province to cause the Persians to turn back. Their plan was to continue to lure the Persians deeper and deeper into the vast region, never allowing a large engagement with the enemy. After weeks of chasing the enemy, the Persians were exhausted and decided to withdraw, having lost some 80,000 men in the 70 days of the campaign. (8:53-55)

Darius' "campaign suggests in many features the Russian campaign of Napoleon, though the latter by no means failed for lack of careful preparation." (8:55) Darius failed in his first major foreign invasion for two basic reasons: first,

through a lack of study of his problem and secondly, in his belief that numbers alone sufficed in war. Although this campaign failed to defeat the Scythian, Darius was able to subdue Thrace. (8:55)

PERIOD	EVENT
550 B.C.	Born
522 B.C.	Became King of Persia
520 B.C.	Conquered Ionia
511 B.C.	Invasion of Scythia
499 B.C.	Ionian Revolt
492 B.C.	First Expedition Against Greece
490 B.C.	Second expedition and Battle of Marathon
487 B.C.	Revolt in Eygpt
486 B.C.	Died

TABLE 1. Key Events: Darius the Great

Chapter Three

THE PERSIAN ARMY

THE TROOPS

The army that Darius assembled for his large campaigns was drawn from all parts of the empire. Some soldiers joined Darius' army for the opportunities to plunder, as a reward for their services. But, the main reason for joining the army was the royal edict which called for troops to fight a specific campaign. (1:153)

The troops weren't necessarily paid during their service as it was difficult to distinguish between rations and pay. (11:135) The armies were fed by simply seizing and gathering supplies wherever they could be found. "Provinces through which a Persian army passed were eaten up as by a plague of grasshoppers." (8:58)

The Persian soldier was armed with a 7 foot spear, $3\frac{1}{2}$ foot bow, turban, large quiver on his back, a scale-like armor, wicker-work shields, and a dagger in the girdle. This type of trooper later proved to be ill-fitted for hand-to-hand combat with the Greek hoplite. (8:59)

The troops received excellent training; however, the army lacked cohesion and unity. The cavalry was its most effective

arm, and the Persians were the best, followed by the Medes. The foot-soldier made up the majority of the Persian army. The infantry was composed of light troops, slingers, darters, and archers. The numbers were abundant, but had little discipline. Some of the best troops in the Persian army were the Greek mercenaries. Overall, because of the many nationalities, field organization and discipline in Darius' army was wretched. (8:58-60)

BATTLEFIELD STRATEGY

In battle, the Persians preferred to advance straight on the enemy, without resort to strategem or tactical maneuvering. Wide, open plains were choice battlefields because they held large numbers of troops and also allowed the cavalry to maneuver. Cavalry usually flanked the infantry units on the wings. The foot-soldiers were ordered in great squares--at least 30 to 100 men deep--with lightly armed troops all around. (8:60)

In terms of battlefield tactics, last minute maneuvering was also rare because it was likely to cause dangerous gaps in the formations. Also, it could possibly expose a flank to missiles or a shock attack. So, there wasn't much tactical ingenuity. Persians tried to force the enemy to fight on unfavorable ground, or with only a portion of his forces. Here, the objective was to outflank the enemy, since only the flanks and rear of a well-armed infantry were sensitive and vulnerable. The cavalry was a very important arm in the wide plains of

central and southwest Asia. Darius' great predecessor, Cyrus, discovered the benefits of the cavalry and "soon Persian heavy cavalry and mounted archers were by far the best in the world." (9:16)

The key to the Persian weaponry was the bow, as it is pictured on Achaemenid coins, and a short sword called "akinakes" by the Greeks. (11:134) The bow was effective and important for both cavalry and infantry. The Persians avoided close-quarters fighting during infantry combat until their foes had been thoroughly disorganized by swarms of foot archers at the front and on rushes of horse-mounted archers against the flanks and rear. The army also had the ability to adapt to all types of terrain. (10:22) The Persian soldier's body armor gave the Persian less protection than the bronze ponoply of the Greek soldier. Additionally, the Persian spear was shorter--a disadvantage when in close contact with the Greek battle formation, the phalanx. (6:104)

NAVY

The Persian navy consisted primarily of Phoenicians and to some extent Ionian Greeks. The Persians fought as marines and took an interest in naval affairs. Under Darius, an Ionian admiral, Scylax, sailed down the Indus River to the Indian Ocean and then to Egypt. Darius also built a canal connecting the Mediterranean with the Red Sea--a forerunner of the Suez Canal. Thus, the Persians fostered trade and commerce by the sea.

Persians themselves rarely took to the water for most could not swim. Therefore, not known as a seafaring people, they left the sea to their subjects. (11:137)

In the Eastern Mediterranean, Darius had ample ships and seamen to call on. The Phoenicians could supply two to three hundred warships on demand. Egypt, as well as Cilicia, Cyprus, and the East Aegean Greeks could match that total. "Darius even had special horse-transports commissioned when he wanted to punish the Athenians in 490 B.C." (6:64-65) So, the Persian naval requirements were small, and met very well.

Chapter Four

MILTIADES AND THE GREEKS

BIOGRAPHY

Miltiades, who would become the chief adversary of the Persian army at Marathon, was born approximately 554 B.C. in Athens. He was the son of Cimon, head of one of the oldest families in Attica. His father was wealthy and influential, so much so that he was banished by the tyrant Pisistratus and was later assassinated by the tyrant Hippias. Miltiades escaped a similar fate by leaving Athens and going to Thracian Chersonese, which he inherited from an uncle. (20:169)

Miltiades became the ruler of the Chersonese, a settlement founded by the Athenians in what is now known as the Gallipoli peninsula. (21:101) He took power by imprisoning his opposition. Miltiades hired mercenaries and further strengthened his position by marrying Hegesipyla, the daughter of a Thracian prince. (23:563)

When Darius extended the Persian power to the Hellespont and Thrace, Miltiades, as prince of the Chersonese, submitted and paid tribute to the great Persian King. He was one of the many tributary rulers who joined their armies with the Persians during the Scythian invasion. He was left at the Danube with

the other Greeks to guard the bridge that the Persians built to get over and back. After a while, Miltiades tried to encourage the others to destroy the bridge, so that Darius would be trapped north of the Danube. Miltiades was unsuccessful in convincing the others to destroy the bridge. It was known that Miltiades had advised the other Greeks, for the vengeance of Darius was to be later directed against Miltiades, "who had counselled such a deadly blow against his empire and his person." (7:6)

Miltiades escaped, returning to maintain possession of the Chersonese. He fostered goodwill with his Athenian countrymen during the Ionian revolt in 499 B.C. by driving the Persian garrisons from the islands of Imbros and Lemnos, thus establishing Greek rule. Athens had ancient claims to these islands but never had been able to accomplish it themselves. (7:6)

After Darius subdued the Ionian revolt, he was able to turn his attention to Miltiades and the rest of his enemies. Miltiades loaded five galleys and fled before the Phoenician fleet until Darius caught him in Thracian Chersonese. The fleet chased Miltiades across the Aegian Sea. Though Miltiades reached Athens safely, his son was captured by the enemy fleet.

Miltiades, the tyrant of the Chersonese, caused a political crisis upon his arrival in Athens. Since he was by birth an Athenian and violently hostile to Persia and to the Pisistratids who had killed his father, Miltiades was the man the aristocratic anti-Persian fraction wanted to lead the Athenians against the

followers of Cleisthenes. Cleisthenes had been one of the first to capitulate to the Persians. (13:19)

The Athenians were grateful for Miltiades' services at Imbros and Lemnos. However, Miltiades and his partisans were put on trial for tyranny. The chief magistrate, Themistocles, was also anti-Persian. Miltiades was not only acquitted but also elected one of the "strategi" or generals for the year. For an ex-tyrant and member of an old oligarchic family to be elected to one of the highest offices in the democracy was significant. The Athenian constitution of Cleisthenes had a firm hold and was invulnerable to internal enemies. Miltiades easily adapted to the new circumstances. (20:70)

It is important to note that during this time period, 510-490 B.C., Athenians were enjoying a free and democratic city--where traditions of tyranny and seditious party strife were disappearing. However, the memory of the tyrants Hippias and Isagoras was still on their minds to rule out any thought of a return to oligarchy or tyranny. For this reason, the election of a tyrant like Miltiades was even more significant. (20:168)

THE IONIAN GREEKS

When Cyrus the Great expanded the Persian empire and conquered Lydia in 547 B.C., he annexed Ionia, which had been under Lydian rule. He defeated all the Ionian colonies on the Asia Minor coast except the island of Samos, which held out under

the leadership of Polycrates. By 520 B.C., Darius defeated Polycrates and assumed control of all Ionia. (3:69)

As Persian subjects, the Ionians were forced to pay tribute and perform military service. The mainland Greeks didn't take much action to counter the Persian threat. Sparta sent envoys to the Persians, protesting their actions and proclaiming their right to protect all Greek cities. However, they didn't follow up their words with any action. Other Greek cities, such as Athens, didn't do anything. (3:69)

IONIAN REVOLT

Persian rule, in addition to the annual tribute, provided for a certain economic and cultural freedom for the Ionians.

> Where Persia infringed most on the internal life of the Greek states was in her backing of tyrants, and this ultimatley led to revolt, which broke out in 500 or 499, under circumstances which are far from clear. (10:43-44)

The Ionians sent out a call for assistance from the mainland, and the Athenians sent 20 ships with soldiers to help, and the city of Ereteria, on the island of Eubaea, also sent 5 ships to aid the Ionians. Initially the combined Greek forces did well, defeating, capturing, and destroying the city of Sardis, a major city on the western end of the Persian Empire. After this victory, the Athenians and Eretrians left the Ionians on their own. Ultimately the revolt collapsed, for the Persian fleet overwhelmed the Ionians at the naval battle of Lade, near Mitetus. (3:70) It had taken Persia a decade to regain complete control. (10:44)

In retaliation for the burning of Sardis, the Persians sacked and burned Miletus. Additionally, they transplanted part of the population to the Tigris Piver, near the Persian Gulf, some 1000 miles away. The defeat of Miletus was a big blow, for it was the richest and most brilliant of Ionian cities. (3:71)

In the Persian capital of Susa, Darius noted the Greek mainland's involvement in the rebellion. His empire stretched from Egypt to India, and from the Persian Gulf to the Black Sea--over 2 million square miles. Now he could turn his attention to the Greeks. (3:71)

PERIOD	EVENT
554 B.C.	Born in Athens
511 B.C.	Assisted Darius during Scythian invasion
499 B.C.	Drove Persians out of Imbros and Lemnos during Ionian revolt
490 B.C.	Battle of Marathon
489 B.C.	Invasion of Paros
489 B.C.	Died

TABLE 2. Key Events: Miltiades

Chapter Five

THE GREEK ARMY

GREEK HOPLITE WARRIOR

The Greek characteristic method of waging war "was to place in the field as its one dominant arm a phalanx of hoplites . . . a body of infantry drawn up in close order in several ranks which are also close together." (2:3) Hoplites were "the troops who take their name from their shields. The character and use of their shields were of the essence of their fighting in battle." (2:3)

The hoplite infantryman was well adapted to the mountainous terrain of Greece. The hills and narrow valleys, which bordered the sea, prevented wide use of cavalry. The climate encouraged an outdoor life for this hardy and independent people. The Greeks borrowed their weapons and armor technology from the Carions and the Phoenicians, and their "warlike attitude was developed by an incessant struggle for existence." (17:2)

The hoplite soldier was equipped with a brazen helmet, breastplate and greaves (shin guards), oval shield, short sword, and spear. (17:3) The round shield, which was 3 feet across, was carried on the left arm, which passed through a ring to a grip held on the left hand. The shield covered most of the

man's body, allowing the right arm to wield a seven to eight foot spear, the hoplite's chief weapon. (2:3)

The shield effectively covered the hoplite's left side, enabling his right side to gain some lateral protection from the shield of the soldier to his right in the formation. So, the line of hoplites alternated defensive shields and attacking spears, acting in unison. (2:3)

In battle, the desire for personal distinction was a secondary cause to the sake of the city-state or nation. The Greeks found personal satisfaction in great athletic festivals, "where men won honour before all the Greeks." (2:4)

The army came from the upper and middle classes, based on traditions established in the seventh century B.C., for the safety of the community depended on the success of the army. Not all able-bodied men were in the hoplite phalanx. Since city-states developed from aristocracies, nobles would fight, if young enough. The duty and privilege of serving as hoplites was given to those in the middle class who could afford their own equipment. Warfighting skills were acquired through early training and practice. To respond to the call to defend a city was a duty without hesitation, but it was a hard duty. War was an interruption of their happy lives. They knew that bravery wasn't an everyday possession, for war was not an everyday business for the Greeks. What suited the Greek citizen-soldier was battle in which the intensity of one short effort carried him forward, for man's duty to his comrade was "the best spur to his intent." (2:9)

THE PHALANX

The primary tactical formation employed by the Greeks was the phalanx. The phalanx consisted of parallel lines of hoplites, some 8 to 16 men in depth. The front ranks pointed their spears toward the enemy; those in the rear rested their spears on the shoulders of the men in front, forming a hedge to break up the flight of enemy arrows. (9:17) The continuity of the line was paramount, for each man depended on those next to him.

The right flank of the phalanx was called the head and the left the tail, for the phalanx usually marched by the right. The commander's station was to the right. The best men were always in the front ranks and faced the direction from which the enemy would attack. The troops were thought to countermarch "and to move in column of sections, from which they could either wheel into line to a flank or prolong the front of the leading section." (17:4) While marching, each soldier was allowed six feet breadth and depth; however, for fighting, the ranks and files closed to lock shields and spears.

The basic tactic of the phalanx was simple--direct advance and engagement with the enemy along the entire line. There were several tactical formations, such as refusal of the right of left wing as well as various forms of columns and wedges. Maneuvers were made in measured step to the sound of fifes. Cadence was necessary to preserve order in the phalanx with the long spears.

The primary advantages of the phalanx were unit cohesion and weight, for it was difficult to withstand the impact of

the charge when delivered at short range on level ground. This value was important in either an offensive or defensive blow from the short distance in close order. (8:66-68)

The weaknesses of the phalanx were the flanks and the rear. Light troops from the lower class, the psiloi, protected the flanks; however, they were neither well disciplined nor well trained, and many were mercenaries. (9:17) Marching over long distances or rough ground exposed another weakness. Movement of the large cohesive units over rough ground caused gaps to open up the ranks to the enemy. Therefore, the choice of battleground was an important Greek strategy. Additionally, there was only one line, as all troops were committed the first time. There weren't any reserves to reestablish a failing line. (8:66)

The Greeks employed three basic orders of battle in phalanx warfare. The first was the *parallel*, *where two lines* stood against each other. The strength was in equal numbers at every point along the line. The weakness was that the line could be broken anywhere by numbers or valor, or a shorter line could be outflanked by a longer. The second order involved a parallel with one or more wings reinforced, enabling that reinforced wing to crush or surround the enemy's wing. The third order consisted of the oblique, where one wing which was strengthened advanced faster than the other wing, crushing the enemy's flank and causing complete demoralization of the enemy. The following center and other wing would be in position to follow up or pursue. (8:68)

The character of hoplite fighting tended to limit the advance of the art of war. As stated above, battleground was important to allow close alignment of the troops. "The advantage of fighting downhill was so great--for it added momentum of the phalanx --that no army could allow its opponent to fight at this advantage." (2:5-6) If you could not engage the enemy on level ground with a fair chance of victory, then it was almost useless to challenge him at all. This fact limited the Greek strategy. To defend its land, the defending state's army went out to engage the enemy. Thus, the strategist chose the battlefield to suit his army. The phalanx never detached forces, for the main battle was the most important. (2:6)

There wasn't any study of the art of war or what is known as logistics today. The Greek armies weren't hampered by large baggage trains trailing the army. Troops lived in the country they traversed--they presented no great hardship on the local economies. The Greek army was small in number, and could average 15 miles a day marching and still be ready for battle.

Therefore, the Greek hoplite soldier--well armed, trained, and united in the phalanx--presented a formidable opponent on the battlefield.

Chapter Six

THE INVASION OF GREECE

PRE-INVASION

Following the Ionian rebellion, Darius knew that Ionia would remain insecure as long as the Greeks were free to support their revolts. Darius' political aim was to install Hippias, son of Pisistratus, as the pro-Persian tyrant on the mainland. (24:46)

Other motives for the invasion of Greece were also important. It was time for Darius to put a stop to the disturbing contrast between the freedom of the Greeks on the mainland and the subjection of the many peoples in Asia Minor. Additionally, the invasion represented an ambition to further expand the empire, for Greece represented part of the civilized world not yet conquered. (21:100)

By 493 B.C., the last throes of the Ionian rebellion were over, and Darius turned his attention to Greece and Eretria. Before sending his great army, he first sent emissaries to all of the Greek cities to see if they would surrender and pay homage, rather than face the great Persian army. Darius demanded the customary "earth and water" homage. However, the Greeks refused his offers, and Darius prepared his army. (20:173)

The first Persian expedition in 492 B.C. ended in disaster, for the Persian fleet was caught in a storm and destroyed. A second army and fleet was gathered and put together in the summer of 490 B.C. According to various records, the Phoenicians and Ionians furnished some 600 war galleys to transport the large Persian army across the Aegian Sea. (20:174)

This second army involved a change in command and a new strategy. Real supreme authority in the army appears to have been given to Datis, a Median. Datis' orders were the complete subjugation of Greece, with special attention to Athens and Eretria. After taking these cities, he was to take the people captive and deliver them as slaves to Darius. (7:17)

Darius' plan for the invasion of Greece was aided by Hippias of Athens, whose father, Pisistratus, was one of Greece's most hated tyrants. When Pisistratus died, his two sons were targeted for assassination, but Hippias survived and seized control of the government himself. Because of his abuses and excesses, he was deposed and escaped to Sardis. There, he offered to help the Persian armies invade Greece in exchange for the Persians making him governor of Athens. This more or less backfired on the Persians, for it helped unite the Greeks "in the most enthusiastic and determined spirit of resistance, against a man who had now added the baseness of treason to the wanton wickedness of tyranny." (1:217)

Hippias told Darius that the Alcemaeonidae, an Athenian family active in Attica politics, opposed Miltiades and were

willing to reinstate Hippias. They, therefore, represented a powerful "fifth column" who favored the Persians. The Persian hoped to draw the Athenians out of the city so that it could be taken without a battle. The Persians faced two problems in this regard. First, they had to boost the morale of the conspirators, and secondly, get the army out of Athens. (13:20)

THE INVASION

Under command of Datis the Mede and Artaphernes, Darius' nephew, the Persian army set out with a new plan to strike directly across the Aegian Sea. Their object was to use new "horse landing" craft, take the Cyclades, and then punish the two main cities that took part in the Ionian raid on Sardis. (4:236-7)

After leaving Ionia and joining the rest of the fleet at Samos, the army sailed west. The Persians next took the island of Euboea and captured their first goal, the city of Eretria. Traitors gave up the city after a six-day seige. (4:237)

After the fall of Eretria, Datis and the Persians left to take on the biggest challenge, the Greek mainland. They didn't sail directly into the Saronis Gulf, but they chose the beaches far from the enemy's city to get an unopposed landing. This landing took place at Marathon, where the plain provided good cavalry country. Further, this was the spot where Hippias and his father landed 50 years earlier in their successful expedition against Athens. (4:236-238)

So, the Persians accomplished two of their immediate objectives. First, to help the conspirators in Athens, they subdued

Eretria, to "strike terror into the Athenians and drive them into the conspirators' arms." (13:20) Second, they landed at Marathon, 26 miles northeast of Athens, in order to march on the city and draw out the enemy. (13:20)

THE GREEKS

The fall of Eretria greatly alarmed the Athenians. They were extremely worried and saw little hope, but still wouldn't surrender. They requested help from the Spartans, who were sympathetic. However, the summons reached them on the eve of a great religious festival and "such was their reverence for tradition that they dared not move before the full moon had come." (20:177) Therefore, they didn't arrive to help until the battle was over.

The Athenians had eleven members in their war council; ten were generals who were elected annually. Each general was in command of the local tribes of Athens, and each had equal military authority. Miltiades was one of the ten strategi for the year. His rank, military experience and hatred of Persia gave him undisputed pre-eminence among his colleagues. (20:177)

Up to the day of the battle of Marathon, the Medes and Persians were regarded as invincible. During all previous meetings with Greek troops in Asia Minor, Cyprus, and Egypt, the Greeks had lost. (7:4)

STRATEGY-TACTICS

In the area of engineering, neither the Greeks nor the Persians achieved any marked improvement over the engineering

techniques developed by the Assyrians. The act of fortification had progressed as far as it would with the means available, but the art of seigecraft had failed to keep pace. Walled cities were safe from everything but starvation, except for "surprise, ruse or betrayal." (9:18)

Economic and logistical considerations were also very important to both sides. Persia, because she was such a great land power, had problems with lines of communications, which spread some thousands of miles long. These were subject to harassment and interruption both by land and sea. (9:19)

The Greeks, on the other hand, had relatively complex and nonself-sufficient societies. The various city-states depended on imports from distant, overwater routes, for both war and peace. The military security of several Greek states was based on the extremely expensive and relatively sophisticated Trireme fleet, which could be maintained and operated only at a great cost and with highly trained and skilled manpower. (9:10)

THE PERSIAN ARMY

Miltiades knew from personal experience the weaknesses of the Persian army. He knew they no longer consisted of the hardy shepherds and mountaineers from Persia proper and Kurdistan, who had won Cyrus' battles. The army was now full of unwilling contingents from the conquered lands of the empire--they were "fighting more from compulsion than from any zeal in the cause of their masters." (7:20)

The Persian army was composed of mountaineers from Hyrcania and Afghanistan, wild horsemen from the steppes of Khorasson, black archers of Ethiopia, and swordsmen from the banks of the Indus, Oxus, Euphrates, and the Nile Rivers. Besides the Persians, there was no national cause to inspire, no uniformity of language, creed, race, or military system. However, the army did have many gallant and battle-tested veterans. (7:23) Since they were recruited from every part of the empire, they had none of the "esprit de corps" of the Athenians. But, since there was no cohesion, a panic would be fatal. (8:86)

THE BATTLE SITE

Hippias knew the geography of Attica and also knew the plain of Marathon offered adequate terrain for disembarking the army. It also was the nearest ground where cavalry could be deployed.

> The landing of the Persians on the flat shore of Marathon with the hills encircling it reflected their desire to force a decision with the cavalry on terrain that favoured this tactic. The horses were transported on ships specially equipped for this purpose. It was, so to say, the first great 'amphibian operation' in history. (18:32)

The plain of Marathon was located on the eastern coast of Attica, eastnortheast of Athens. The plain, separated from the city by Mount Pentelikus, was connected to Athens by two roads, one north of the mountain and the other south. The northern road was 22 miles long, shorter but more difficult to travel. The southern road was 26 miles long and easier to travel. Marching along this route took $6\frac{1}{2}$ hours, and it was the road Hippias and his father Pisistratus marched to Athens on some 47 years earlier. (14:346)

The actual battle took place on a bare open plain between the lower spurs of Mount Pentelikus and Marathon Bay. In 490 B.C., there were two marshes on the plain, one at each end. The larger one, the Great Marsh, was to the north between the hills and the sea. (20:178) The plain, some six miles long and two miles wide, probably consisted of grainfields with scattered trees. However, since the battle occurred in either August or September, there was no grain because the harvest would have been complete. (26:307)

The Persians may have established their headquarters position in the northwest corner of the plain. The hills and marsh would have given the staff protection from surprise attack while it permitted access to the rest of the army. Water and pasture were also available for the horses. The Persian fleet moored along the Schoinia Beach, an excellent landing place for horses and men. The main army camp was probably between the Great Marsh to the north and the Charadra River. (26:297)

While the Persians landed and occupied the northern half of the plain, the Greeks were not surprised; they may have suspected Hippias would land at Marathon. (21:102) The Athenian strategy was to secure the southern end of the plain, thereby controlling both of the roads to Athens before the Persians got to them. The Greeks camped in the valley of Avlona and in the foothills, near a shrine dedicated to Heracles. "The choice of the admirable position was more than half the victory." (3:239) This position offered good water supplies and a secure

defensive position from where they had a view of the entire Persian army. Their back was to wooded hills, and they were able to deny the enemy use of the coastal road. They commanded the mountain road to Athens and they also controlled the main road and the southern gate of the plain. (4:239)

The position of each army raises some interesting questions, such as: why did the Persians allow the Athenians to gain the advantage over the beachhead? One theory is that Datis was willing for the Athenians to get there, for if they wanted to do battle, he could beat them.

For several days, the armies faced each other. Athenians were waiting for the full moon so the Spartans would come to their assistance. The Persians had several options, but they were somewhat perplexed. Their strategy was to approach Athens with a whole force of infantry and cavalry, which together would be invincible. If they marched south to the road along the shore towards Athens, their flanks would have been vulnerable along the entire length of the march. They delayed several days to make a decision. This made it better for the Athenians, who were waiting for help.

Datis and Hippias were also waiting on a signal from Hippias' friends about the right time to take the city, since it was undefended. However, no signal came and the Persians probably knew that the Spartans were on the way to assist the Athenians. (21:104)

FIGURE 1 BATTLEFIELD MAP

Chapter Seven

THE BATTLE OF MARATHON

THE ARMIES

In the course of this research, it was interesting to note the great difference in the strengths of the two armies. Almost every historian agreed that the Athenian army numbered around 10,000 hoplites. The Persian army, on the other hand, was estimated to have been anywhere from 40,000 to 600,000. (26:309)

As discussed earlier, the Greek army had ten generals who shared joint command. Each general took a day to command--in other words, they took turns. In addition to the ten generals, there was the polemarch, who was considered the eleventh general or chief of the military force. He was also to some degree the administrator of foreign affairs. Callimachus was the polemarch at the time of the battle.

In the Athenian army there was considerable debate regarding the proper course of action required to engage the Persians. The generals were evenly divided, half saying that they shouldn't fight because they were vastly outnumbered, and the others, led by Miltiades, who said they should fight. The tie breaking vote was left to Callimachus. Miltiades is said by Greek historian, Herodotus, to have confronted Callimachus with this speech:

> "Callimachus," said he, "it is for you today to choose, whether you will enslave Athens, or free her and thereby leave such a memorial for all posterity as was left not even by Hormodius and Aristogiton. For now is Athens in greater peril than ever since she was first a city; and if her people bow their necks to the Medes, their fate is certain, for they will be delivered over to Hippias; but if our city be saved, she may well grow to be the first of Greek cities. How then this can be brought about, and how it comes that the deciding voice in these matters is yours, I will now show you. We ten generals are divided in counsel, some bidding us to fight and some to forbear. Now if we forbear to fight, it is likely that some great schism will rend and shake the courage of our people till they make friends of the Medes; but if we join battle before some at Athens can be infected by corruption, then let heaven but deal fairly with us, and we may well win in this fight. It is you that all this concerns; all hangs on you; for if you join yourself to my opinion, you make your country free and your city first in Hellas; but if you choose the side of them that would persuade us not to fight, you will have wrought the very opposite of the blessings whereof I have spoken. (15:265)

Callimarchus cast his vote in favor of Miltiades' position. After this, all of the other generals gave Miltiades their days of command, and he became the sole leader of the army. It is said that he waited until his regular day of rotation before he started the battle, thus not creating any animosity among them. (14:243)

While the Greeks were waiting for battle, they were unexpectedly joined by 1000 Plataian hoplites. Plataia was a little town that the Athenians had previously twice assisted, keeping it from being swallowed up by the Boiotian League. This support was quite unexpected, for smaller states were not known for sending their entire army to help others. The Plataians went "to share the fate of the Athenians in their apparently hopeless struggle with Persia." (20:178) The theory was that

if Athens fell, nothing would keep Plataia from the same fate at the hands of the Persians.

THE PERSIAN STRATEGY

As previously stated, both armies were poised in position, waiting for the opportune moment. Datis knew his army couldn't stay indefinitely in its position. If they didn't attack, they had to re-embark in the face of the enemy or make another move. This would provide an opportunity for the Athenians. Finally, the Persian leader made a decision to redeploy part of his army so that they could sail around the bay by sea to Athens. This dash to the city would take about 12 hours. (4:244) The rest of the split force would stay in place to do battle with the outnumbered Athenians. It was a shrewd plan on the part of the Persians. If the Athenians remained in their foothill camp, they would be leaving the city without a defense. If the Greeks withdrew to Athens, then the land force would rejoin the sea-lifted force when they landed nearer to the city. (21:104) "The subtlety of the strategic design is notable, even though it miscarried owing to a variety of factors." (16:27)

THE BATTLE

Datis attempted to move his forces out at midnight under the moonlight in order to achieve a surprise, the key to success. His cavalry was re-embarked under a covering force but the surprise element failed. After the cavalry was loaded on the ships, the bulk of the Persian forces moved south along the plain to

within a mile of the Greek positions. Their purpose was to attract the attention of the Greeks and make their withdrawal more difficult.

At first light, the entire Athenian and Plataian armored force, some 10,000 strong, came out of their camp and spread out to cover the width of the Persian positions. The Greeks had neither cavalry or archers. (4:247) The Greeks had Callimachus, the polemarch, commanding the right wing, the place of honor. The Plataians were the left wing, and the center was commanded by Themistacles and Aristides. (8:87) In order to extend the Greek lines to cover the Persians, Miltiades thinned the center of the line to four ranks deep and strengthened the flanks to eight ranks deep. (13:24)

Battle lines having been set, the Greeks raised their battle cry or "paean" and advanced from the high ground. (14:348) Contrary to the usual tactics, Miltiades launched his forward thrust without missile preparation. This caught the Persians off guard. (4:249) The charge by the Greeks astounded the Persians, for it looked like an act of desperate courage or a little short of insanity, for such a small force to attack, without cavalry or archers. (14:348) According to Herodotus, the Greeks charged on a run, but modern experiments have proved that it was physically impossible. It must be assumed that the Greeks covered the first 1000 meters in an ordinary pace which was the standard tactic. When they came into the range of the Persian archers, they broke into a charge or quick pace to lessen the effectiveness of the archers. (26:319)

The Persian center, where the best troops were, broke the weakened Greek center and pushed them back. As the Greeks retreated, they drew the Persian front into a convex line, drawing the Greek wings inward and reducing the original length of the front. (13:24) On a predetermined trumpet signal, the two Greek wings, without losing their steadiness, wheeled inward "upon the mass of struggling Oriental soldiery." (8:88) The wings closed in on the center "so as to enclose it as it were in a pincer movement," (26:319) The inward wheel of the Greek flanks resulted in a double envelopment, very similar to that used by Hannibal some 300 years later at Cannae. (13:24) The Greek tactical maneuver disconcerted the enemy and put him at the mercy of the Greek phalanx. The heavily armored Greek hoplites turned the Persians inward and prevented them from using their superior mobility to escape and come again. When the Athenians closed the pincers on the Persian center, they let the Persian wings flee while they converged on those who had broken the Greek center. (4:250-251) The Persians became demoralized as the Greeks pursued. The conflict became more severe and a slaughter ensued. (8:88)

After the successful pincer movement, the Persians retreated to the northeast corner of the plain, near the naval landing area at Schoinia Beach. They failed to regroup and ran into the Great Marsh where a panic broke out. This is probably where the Persians suffered their greatest losses. The Persian navy boarded the fleeing troops, loaded the ships and escaped out to

sea. The main part of the Persian fleet was able to flee, as the Greeks only captured seven ships. The hasty departure saved the great Persian fleet but cost the lives of the soldiers who didn't make it. (26:320)

The Persian losses in the center were high as few got away. By mid-morning, the battle was over. (4:250-1) The Athenians lost 192 men and the Persians 6,400. Callimachus, the polemarch, was killed as well as the tyrant, Hippias. The large number of Persian losses was due to the pincer movement, the retreat into the marsh, and the headlong retreat of the Persian ships. (26:320)

After Datis had hastily embarked the beaten remnants of his army, he had to meet up with the other Persian force which had embarked that night. The Greeks, meanwhile, had to march quickly to Athens, in order to prevent the Persians from taking the undefended city. (13:25) After the Persians were in their ships, the Greeks saw a signal being sent to the Persian fleet from Hippias' supporters. The Athenians reorganized their regiments, leaving a guard force over the prisoners and the spoils, and set out for Athens. Meanwhile, the Persians hoped to find the city in the hands of those who had gone before them; however, when they arrived, they found the "spearmen of Marathon facing them." (4:251) Datis and the Persians wanted no more of the Greeks and set sail for Asia, returning empty. (1:227)

> This victory shows . . . the most brilliant of the variations from the parallel order of armies then uniformly in vogue. The battle exhibited a set and well-digested manoeuvre promptly and intelligently executed in the heat of action. (8:90)

Chapter Eight

CONCLUSION

DARIUS

After the Persian defeat and return to Persia, Darius was even more irritated and determined to lead the whole force of his empire himself against the Greeks and the Athenians. He "considered their courage and energy in defending their country an autrocious outrage against himself, and a crime." (1:246) Before he was able to lead his army against the Greeks, a revolt broke out in 487 B.C., in Egypt, and diverted his attention. After nominating his favorite son, Xerxes, to succeed him, Darius set out to quell the rebellion in Egypt. However, in the course of this expedition, he died, thus ending a reign from 521-486 B.C. (20:183)

Analyzing the career of Darius could initially focus on his failures. Historians are divided in their assessment.

> The greatness of Darius was the greatness of position and not of character. He was the absolute sovereign of nearly half the world, and such, was held up very conspicuously to the attention of mankind . . . Darius performed no great exploit, and he accomplished no great object while he lived; and he did not even leave behind him any strong impressions of personal character . . . They admire Darius only on account of the elevation on which he stood. (1:249)

To concentrate an analysis on just his unsuccessful campaigns against the Scythians, the Greeks, or the Egyptians revolt would not properly evaluate the greatness of Darius. "He preserved and made permanent an empire which seemed on the eve of disappearing; he showed a genius for organization unparalleled among Eastern Conquerors." (20:183) Thus, Darius left a great Persian empire to his son, Xerxes.

MILTIADES

Following the tremendous Greek victory at Marathon, the influence of Miltiades was supreme, for he had prophesied success and pulled it off. He now had the opportunity for greatness but he was to abuse it. (20:182)

Miltiades was extremely enterprising and skillfully convinced the Athenian assembly to give him a fleet of 70 ships and a land force to go along with it. In return, he would give the city the spoils of war that would not only defray the cost of the expedition but also enrich the city. Due to his popularity, the assembly gave him what he asked for, no questions asked. Miltiades promised his troops, who didn't know where they were going, victory, plus an abundance of gold. (1:238)

Miltiades turned his fleet and army against the island of Paros, which was in the center of the southern portion of the Aegean Sea. His intent was to settle a private grudge with the inhabitants of Paros. He sailed without declaration of war, landed on the island, and demanded a hundred talents as

a fine for their submission to the Persians. The inhabitants refused his blackmail so he laid seige to the town. (20:182)

Miltiades' efforts were to prove fruitless, for he found that attacking a fortified town much more difficult than fighting the undisciplined Persian hordes at Marathon. After a month on the island, he abandoned the seige and returned to Athens. Miltiades was wounded during the expedition. (1:240-3)

Miltiades' return to Athens was received with wild anger in response to his semi-piratical expedition and his abusing the people's confidence. He was brought before the Heliaea and tried for his offenses. The wound he received had gangrened, and he was dying. Despite this, many called for the death penalty. However, he was convicted and fined 50 talents, which was the cost of the expedition. Miltiades was never able to pay the fine before he died. His son Cimon paid the fine to clear his father's name.

> Thus a man who seemed destined to play a great part in the affairs of Greece was suddenly removed from the scene, within a few months of the splendid achievement which has forever preserved his name. (20:182-3)

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

For the Persians, the defeat at Marathon was nothing extraordinary, for they had been defeated before, and they would recover in due time. For the Greeks, however, the victory at Marathon was a new revelation, for the Persians were long regarded as invincible, and demonstrated that "free men fight better than slaves." (24:46)

As this study concludes, it is worthwhile to summarize the battle in terms of the Air Command and Staff College Strategy Process Model, starting first with the comparison of the national objectives of each side. The Greeks at Marathon were primarily interested in defending their homeland, repelling the invaders from the East. The Persians, on the other hand, were looking to expand their empire as well as punish the Greeks for their part in the Ionian rebellion.

The doctrines of both sides bear analysis. The Greek method of warfare, the phalanx, was well suited for the mountainous terrain in Greece. The Persians used a combination of infantry and cavalry which presented a formidable opponent. However, the makeup of each army--hoplites against a conscript army made up of subject nationalities--proved to be a significant factor in the final outcome.

The outcome of the battle also showed other various strengths and weaknesses on both sides. In terms of strategy and tactics, the battle demonstrated the strength and flexibility of the phalanx tactical formation. This was aptly exhibited by the weakening and strengthening of the center and wings respectively, by Miltiades. This strategy, coupled with the shock tactics employed by the heavily armed hoplite, caused the Persian force to recoil from the pressure.

Two other significant factors that contributed to the Greek victory were their better military organization and an equally important well-thought out plan of operation. (18:34) Both

sides had time to employ their armies on the battlefield, but the superiority of the Greeks proved out.

Pursuit of the enemy revealed a weakness in the hoplite. His armor and equipment weighed some 70 pounds, which kept the Greeks from rapidly pursuing the enemy. Thus, the Persian army was able to escape relatively intact. (18:34) Another factor in this equation was the fact that annihilation of the opposing force was not the Greek city-state way of warfare.

Some additional thoughts are necessary regarding the classic double envelopment tactic used by Miltiades. One question raised concerns whether or not the maneuver was planned or accidental. One historian wrote that Miltiades understood "the capabilities and limitations of both armies, and of the fundamental military principle of concentration and economy of force." (9:24) Another pointed out:

> It appears beyond doubt that . . . Miltiades could claim high credit for the victory of Marathon, not so much for his conduct of the battle as for his discernment that a moment had come when, for whatever reasons, he could take the Persians at a disadvantage, when he could launch a decisive attack in which the weight and thrust of his hoplites came into their own. (2:11-12)

Miltiades' tactics were to be improved upon by Hannibal at Cannae; however, the principal tactic was the same. This maneuver has not been left to the ancients. "It is a great military conception which became the governing idea in the German war plan of 1914 on the Western front." (22:1)

One additional area deserves exploring. This study has shown that the Greeks were fighting for their homeland against

an army composed primarily of conscripts and conquered peoples. The will to win rested with the Greeks. An analogy can easily be drawn to the situation in Europe today regarding the Warsaw Pact forces.

"Will Poles, Czechs, Hungarians, and Rumanians all fight for the USSR with the last full measure of devotion that wins battles?" (25:48) Today, that is certainly a question worth pondering, as we examine the lessons of history.

Thus, the battle of Marathon was significant in terms of the strategy process but also in terms of world history. Had the Persians won at Marathon, no one could have stopped Darius from advancing

> . . . all over the Western races of mankind. The infant energies of Europe would have been trodden out beneath universal conquest; and the history of the world, like the history of Asia, would have become a mere record of the rise and fall of despotic dynasties, of the incursions of barbarous hordes, and of the mental and political prostration of millions beneath the deaden, the tiara and the sword. (7:17)

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